CCA
CENTRAL CITY ASSOCIATION OF LOS ANGELES

November 14, 2018

Councilmember Jose Huizar
Chair, Planning and Land Use Management Committee
200 N Spring Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Times-Mirror Square historic designation

Councilmember Huizar,

Established in 1924, Central City Association (CCA) is committed to advancing policies and projects that enhance Downtown Los Angeles' vibrancy and increase investment in the region. CCA represents more than 400 businesses, trade associations, and nonprofit organizations, and we are strongly supportive of projects that offer new housing options close to public transit, connect our neighborhoods, and activate our streets.

It's for this reason that we would like to express our opposition to the proposed historic designation of the 1973 addition to the Los Angeles Times building. CCA values the role that historic buildings play in the vitality and culture of a city, and we are proud to have championed the adaptive reuse ordinance that led to the preservation and restoration of many Downtown buildings constructed in the early 1900s. The 1973 addition to the LA Times, designed by William Pereira, does not contribute in the same way as these earlier buildings and should not be designated historic.

In addition, the Pereira addition on the west side of Times-Mirror Square is an unwelcoming structure that closes itself off to people on the street and detracts from the walkability of the Civic Center neighborhood. This 1973 addition also masks the beauty of the neighboring, original building on the east side of the block which was built in 1935 and we support for designation as a historic monument.

The redevelopment of the Pereira addition by Onni Group will open up the block with a pedestrian paseo, create new markets and retail space, and add hundreds of new residents who will help activate a part of Downtown that currently goes dormant after 5 p.m. This is especially important given the impending completion of the Regional Connector station being constructed just across the street at 2nd and Broadway. The Onni towers are also attractive in their own right, reflecting the façade of the 1935 Times building while complementing the glass-and-steel structure of the federal courthouse across the street to the west.

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We do not believe the arguments made in support of historic designation of the Pereira additions have merit. Preserving them would have a negative impact on the walkable and vibrant future of Downtown. We urge you to oppose the historic designation of these buildings constructed less than 50 years ago and to allow the Onni proposal to proceed without additional obstacles to redevelopment.

Sincerely,

Jessica Lall
President & CEO, Central City Association of Los Angeles

cc: Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson
Councilmember Mitchell Englander
Councilmember Bob Blumenfield
Councilmember Curren D. Price, Jr.
Vince Bertoni, Planning Director, Department of City Planning

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